

In the Claims

Claims 10-17 and 21-23 are cancelled without prejudice.

In response to the election/restriction requirement set forth in the Office Action dated August 8, 2005, Applicant respectfully elects Group IV, claims 24-32, for examination herein, as shown in the following set of pending claims.

1-9. (Cancelled)

10-17. (Cancelled)

18-20. (Cancelled)

21-23. (Cancelled)

24. (Previously presented) A trim press article handling apparatus for guiding a web having articles formed therein between coacting cutting dies, comprising:

a treadle including a web guide plate and a pair of guide strips configured to guide the web along the plate and between adjacent articles to align the articles relative to the coacting cutting dies, the first guide strip spaced from the plate at most 3.5 times the thickness of the web and the second guide strip spaced from the plate at least 3.5 times the thickness of the web; and

an article detector carried by the treadle and configured to detect position of the articles relative to the coacting cutting dies.

25. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 24 wherein the first guide strip is spaced apart from about 1 to about 3.5 times the thickness of the web.

26. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 24 wherein the second guide strip is spaced apart from about 3.5 times to about 10 times the thickness of the web.

27. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 24 wherein the article detector comprises an optical emitter and an optical detector configured to receive a light signal from the emitter, wherein an article is conveyed through a path of the light signal to trigger detection of the article.

28. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 27 wherein the first guide strip is provided on a first guide member and the second guide strip is provided on a second guide member.

29. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 28 where in the emitter is carried by one of the first guide member and the second guide member, and the detector is carried by another of the first guide member and the second guide member.

30. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 28 further comprising at least one cross member carried by the guide plate and at least one quick release adjustment collar provided on one or more of the first guide member and the second guide member for securing and releasing the respective guide member to align the respective guide strip relative to the guide plate.

31. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 24 wherein the second guide strip is spaced from the plate a substantially greater amount than the space provided between the first guide strip and the plate to minimize frictional forces generated between the second guide strip, the plate, and web-supported articles being conveyed therebetween.

32. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 24 wherein the first guide strip and the second guide strip are supported for adjustable lateral repositioning relative to one another along the guide plate.